



SPINAL COURIER

SPINAL CORD
COMMISSION

Vol. 3 No. 3

April, 1992

SCI Education and Resource Center Opens!

On Thursday, March 26 the Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission celebrated the grand opening of the Education and Resource Center on Spinal Cord Injuries developed in cooperation with the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, approximately 150 people attended the open house and toured the Center and the Commission's new office space which include the administrative, prevention and case management offices now located in the Prospect Building at 1501 North University, Suites 470 and 400.

The center contains a wealth of information concerning spinal cord injuries and diseases. Books, periodicals and video tapes are available for loan to clients or health professionals. The center's 800+ resources have been catalogued in a computerized database to assist research requests. Also a television monitor and VCR are available for in-house use. For more information contact: Loretta Decker, at 324-9620.



ASSCC Commission Chairman, Russell Patton and Mike Glover, PVA National Service Officer (right) cut the ribbon officially opening the Education and Resource Center assisted by ASSCC Director, Cheryl Vines and Commissioner Glennis Sharp (left).

THIRD ANNUAL SCI CONFERENCE

"Living With Spinal Cord Injuries in the 90's: Taking Responsibility"

The Spinal Cord Commission's third annual seminar is scheduled for June 5, 1991 at the Gilbreath Conference Center, Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock. This year's program theme is "Taking Responsibility" and all sessions are relevant to the responsibilities that individuals with spinal cord disabilities deal with each day including medical care, parenting, psycho-social well being and recreation. All sessions will have individuals with spinal cord disabilities as presenters.

The Commission is pleased to welcome Lieutenant Governor Jim Guy Tucker to address the group for the opening session, followed

by a key note address by Dr. Terry Winkler, a physiatrist who has a spinal cord injury. Dr. Winkler is President of Arkansas A. D. A. P. T. and has become a spokesperson for disabled consumers in Arkansas, particularly in the area of personal care and attendant services. Dr. Winkler's address is titled, "I'm OK, You're OK, the System's Not OK."

The program is diverse and in addition to the sessions, our exhibitors/vendors will return this year by popular demand.

Special thanks for their support of our seminar this year goes to our co-sponsors: Central Arkansas Re-

habilitation Hospital, Northeast Arkansas Rehabilitation Hospital, Baptist Rehabilitation Institute, Fort Smith Rehabilitation Hospital and Northwest Arkansas Rehabilitation Hospital.

You should receive your registration brochure by May 1, if not or if you need additional copies, please contact the Commission office at 324-9620. Registration fees will be \$10.00 for individuals with spinal cord injuries and family members (scholarships available) and \$35.00 for healthcare and rehabilitation professionals.

Mark June 5 on your calendar and be there!

SPINAL COURIER

Published quarterly by
Arkansas State
Spinal Cord Commission

Cheryl L. Vines
Executive Director

Thomas L. Farley
Editor

Published in cooperation with the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Spinal Cord Injury Education and Training Foundation.

BUCKLE UP!

Oasis Renewal Center Offers Support for Disabled Persons

The Oasis Renewal Center, located at 14913 Cooper Orbit Road offers a support group with a variety of activities for disabled persons the third Tuesday night of each month. A delicious meal is served at 6:00 pm, followed by entertainment, fellowship and a speaker or discussion. Upcoming meetings include:

April 21 - Entertainment by Morningstar, a professional singing group. Speaker and discussion on "Accessible Housing."

May 19 - Fellowship and music. Speaker - Dr. Terry Winkler "Why We Can't Wait for the Do Gooders to Do Good." Dr. Winkler, who was paralyzed after a gunshot accident, is completing his residency at VA Hospital.

Accessible transportation is provided. There are no fees but donations are encouraged to help defray costs. Call 225-6890 for transportation, to make a reservation or for more information.

SPINAL COURIER Letters

Questions • Suggestions • Directions • Answers

Dear Readers,

In response to the letter last issue about horseback riding for persons with disabilities, please see the article on page 5 by Sharon Blake.

Little did I know what I was getting into when I asked for letters and photos of Arkansans injured before 11-20-49. Your response has been great and your kind notes about the Spinal Courier have not gone unnoticed.

William Newbern, the fellow that started this whole thing, will have to take a back seat, though. Why, he is just a pup compared to some of these folks. But I'll let those who wrote in tell their own story. Let's start with the youngest - Mr. Newbern!
Editor



**William Newbern
Marianna**

I was injured in a car accident on November 20, 1949. On the way home from a date, I dozed at the wheel, causing the car to leave the roadway and overturn. I was 27 years old at the time and suffered a T-12 injury. I was not wearing a seat belt because cars were not equipped with them then.

I was employed as a cotton buyer for my father at the time of my injury and continued to do so along with income taxes and bookkeeping until 1963. I've also been an engineer in a recording studio which was set up in my home and partner in another radio station in Marianna. I am a member and past commander of American Legion Post #5.

I have a 47 year old daughter, Christine, who now lives in Florida. The picture was taken in my driveway.



**Frances Burnett
Jacksonville**

I was injured on a snowy February 10, 1947, while on my way to work. The car in which I was riding, went out of control, turned over, and threw me out. My spinal cord was severed. After three weeks in the hospital and two years of physical therapy, I went back to work and got on with my life.

I'm an independent, self-sufficient lady who doesn't know the meaning of the words "I can't." I tackle any and everything with a cheerful, positive attitude. I worked 20 years for a small electric motor company, retiring in 1969. I have kept busy since retirement doing volunteer work at local hospitals.
See Letters on page 3

Letters from page 2

pitals and nursing homes. Since giving up driving, I have kept busy working in the church, traveling, and camping & fishing. I also enjoys activities at the Senior Citizen Center and work part time at the Caring Center. I have cared for my family and performed all the functions of day to day living during this time.



Margaret McGee
Bentonville

I don't consider myself "old" but I am getting there. I was shot in the spine on July 6, 1946. I was 13 years, 11 months old at the time and lived in Huford, Texas. I was able to finish high school and married at the age 17. I now have 5 children and 12 grandchildren.

In February of 1979 I had to have my left leg amputated below the knee because of ulcers. My right leg is my "stand by" but have recently been diagnosed as having diabetes. This, needless to say, is my main problem now.

I would love to hear from people with these injuries. It takes a lot of stubbornness and "keep-goingness" to not give up. My husband has been my right hand man - never complaining and there to help me when I need him.

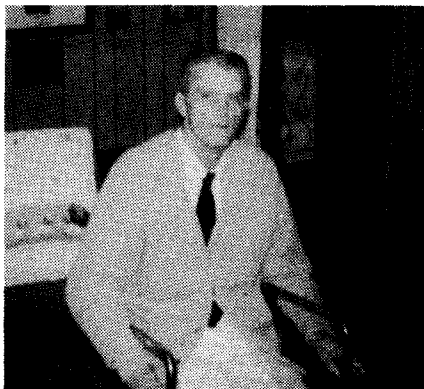


Betty Tener
Bentonville

I was injured in November of 1946 near Fayetteville, Arkansas. Fourth vertebra crushed and spinal cord cut. The doctor said I'd never get out of a wheelchair - but I never got in one. I worked with myself. Although I was paralyzed from the waist down, I'd try keeping time with music until I got where I could move my legs.

My feet and other parts are still paralyzed but I learned to walk with, not on, crutches. My feet and legs give me a lot of trouble now and I have arthritis in my shoulders and arms.

The photo is of me on the Little Rascal so I can be out and about now without being on my feet. I give God the thanks for helping me be able to enjoy life all these years in spite of my handicap.



L. E. Sanders
Leachville

I have been a C-4/C-5 quad since August 13, 1945 which means 46 plus years. I was 17 when I was

injured in an automobile accident. My mother died in 1989, but I am still at home - the Prince family takes care of me. I do not get one dime or any supplement just because they say I own too much. Mother left me a home and some savings but she took care of me 44 years and we still didn't ask for a dime. Also about the article regarding the spinal cord conference June 5th, I might could help you as a speaker on various subjects related to SCI. SCI Life magazine published by the National Spinal Cord Injury Association did my life story in 1988.



❀ **Wilsie Phillips** ❀
Blytheville

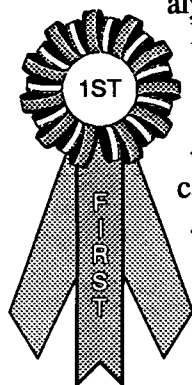
I have been a paraplegic for 56 years due to an automobile accident on 2-13-36. For 2 1/2 years during 1971-1973, I attended Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center where I took a business course along with PT and OT. I will always be grateful for the training I received there. For the first 10 years I worked as a bookkeeper and receptionist. Since then I volunteer a few hours a week as receptionist.

I came to Blytheville Nursing Center in March of 1974 and am 75 years old.

Well, there they are! Looks like the oldest post SCI Arkansan is Wilsie Phillips in Blytheville. Thanks everyone for sharing your story with us. May you live long and prosper. Editor

GROVER EVANS SETS NATIONAL RECORDS

Grover Evans, Vice-Chairman, Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission and City Councilman of Jonesboro, competed at the Far West Regional and Paralympic Trials in Santa Clara, California on March 25 - 29, 1992. Evans qualified for the United States Disabled Swim Team and will compete at the Paralympic Games in



Barcelona, Spain, September 3 - 12, 1992. Evans established six National Records and captured seven gold medals in swimming and table tennis singles during the competition.

His records were in 50 meter freestyle, 50 meter backstroke, 100 meter distance freestyle, 25 yard backstroke, 50 yard freestyle, and 100 yard freestyle. Evans swept the table tennis singles competition in his classification.

Reflecting upon the games Evans said, "I can't believe I did what I did. It's like a fairy tale. But to represent my family, my community, and most importantly my country at this pinnacle event is a blessing and I give all thanks and praise to Almighty God." Evans lives by the motto that you must have hope, faith, and belief in order to achieve your goals. In holding to this creed, the next goal for Evans is to obtain his B.A. in Music with a minor in Health Education in August of this year from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

ASSCC HAS NEW ADDRESS

ASSCC central office is now located in the Prospect Building at 1501 North Univeristy, Suite 470, Little Rock, AR 72207. The office is 1/2 mile North of Park Plaza shopping center and two blocks south of Kavanaugh.

Add-on Power Unit Boosts Manual Wheelchairs



In 1991 Lesley Dunston, an ASSCC client, was given the opportunity to field test a new power drive for manual wheelchairs. A college student at Memphis State University, Lesley (pictured above) quickly agreed to anything that would help her get around the large campus.

The unit was acquired from United Medical in Memphis and in-

stalled by Bo McElya, medical equipment technician. Lesley quickly learned to put the unit through its paces and has been very happy with it. She reports that, "the Freedom Assist helps me get around on the large campus easier than it is for me to drive (my car) everywhere."

The Freedom Assist is manufactured by Camp International as an add-on power drive unit for manual wheelchairs and is not a replacement for an electric wheelchair. The unit is compact, lightweight and is powered by a rechargeable battery which attaches under the seat. The unit is designed to increase the mobility and conserve the energy of manual wheelchair users.

If you would like more information on the Power Assist unit, contact Chris Stovall at 1-800-348-2273 at United Medical in Memphis, TN.

S U P E R S P O K E S

What do April 11, May 16, June 20, July 18, August 15 and September 19 have in common? They are the Super Spokes Saturdays for 1992! Super Spokes Saturdays are patterned after the successful Quickie Super Spokes Saturday on January 11. At that event, 26 future athletes spent a day learning tennis, basketball, conditioning and other sports. It was such a success that a group of volunteers lead by Terri Teer, R.N., of the ACH Spina Bifida Clinic, Gary "Wolf" Woodring of United Medical and the Rollin' Razorbacks and Gary Horton of Horton's Orthotics Lab got together to make it a monthly event!

The Sports days will be held from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at Sylvan Hills High School in Sherwood. Woodring will serve as head coach, assisted by Rollin' Razorbacks, Tim Kazee, Darren Schene-



Jessica Burchfield shoots a basket at Super Spokes Saturday.

beck and Greg Ridley. Volunteers from local health care and rehabilitation facilities will assist. Registration is \$30.00 for the 6 sessions. For more information, contact Cheryl Vines, ASSCC, 324-9624.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Sharon Blake

Horseback riding is widely recognized as one of the best forms of therapeutic recreation available for person with disabilities. While the therapeutic value of riding was first identified by the ancient Greeks, it wasn't until the 1950's when a riding for the handicapped movement swept over Europe and England, that it was recognized as having therapeutic value for people with disabilities.

A therapeutic riding program provides physical, mental and social stimulation. Few barriers exist to exclude a person with a disability from participating. Riders range in age from toddlers to adults in their 70's.

The simple movement of a horse at a walk simulates the "normal" movement made by an able bodies person when walking. The gentle rotation of the rider's pelvis, back, and shoulder girdle are therapeutic in and of themselves. Muscles are toned, joints are exercised, stiffness is decreased. Balance, posture and coordination all gradually improve as a rider progresses in levels of skill.

Exercising the spirit is as important as exercising the body, and riding provides an enormous psychological boost for people with developmental, emotional, and physical handicaps. As riders learn to control the large animal, they develop spatial awareness, body image, self esteem and confidence. They truly sit "tall in the saddle." With improved self esteem and confidence a person gains freedom.

Through therapeutic horseback riding programs, persons with disabilities are brought into increased interaction with people without handicaps. This helps break down may barriers and helps people

with disabilities lead a more normal life.

Three Pines Riding Center in Pine Bluff was founded in 1983 to meet the needs of people with handicaps for beneficial therapeutic recreation. It is affiliated with the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA), a national organization representing over 350 riding centers. NARHA has a self-imposed purpose of expanding the availability of therapeutic horseback riding and ensuring that instructors and centers providing the therapy are trained to the highest of standards. To achieve this, NARHA has established a rigorous accreditation program. Three Pines is fully accredited.

In addition to daily program year-round, the Center hosts Arkansas' Equestrian Special Olympics each October. This event provides the opportunity for people receiving riding therapy to meet in a spirit of friendly competition. The value of hands-on involvement with horses in a group setting has its own unique value. Additionally, the Special Olympics Program helps acquaint the public with the special needs of this segment of the community and to see the rewards and satisfaction of riders excelling at something once through to be beyond reach. The Equestrian Special Olympics exemplifies the attitude of Three Pines - "It's the ability we're building on, not the disability."

Editor's note: Sharon Blake serves as disability travel consultant to Sue Smith Travel in North Little Rock. She has agreed to write future travel related articles for the Spinal Courier and will speak at the SCI Conference on June 5th, 1992. Be sure to look for her on the program.



Rollin' Razorbacks Take Third at Final Four

The Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks made their third straight appearance at the National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament March 20-21 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Unfortunately the "three" stuck as they finished in third place. Achieving their Final Four berth as Midwest Sectional Champions after beating long time foe Grand Rapids, Michigan Pacers by 21 points in the Sectional Tournament in Little Rock March 8, the Razorbacks were ranked 2nd in the nation. Their first round opponents were the Ottawa Royals from Ontario Canada, ranked 8th. Though they started out strong, the Hogs faltered in the second half and the Ottawa team overcame them to win 69-60. Ottawa advanced to the finals to play the Casa Colina Condors who made history at this tournament, beating Ottawa soundly and winning their record ninth national championship.

The Razorbacks showed their strength and persistence, getting "up" for the consolation game on Saturday morning and beating their perennial rivals, the Dallas Mavericks 63-51.

Tim Kazee made the all tournament first team and Paul Ogg and Darren Schenebeck made all tournament second team. The Rollin Razorbacks finished the season with 27 wins and 3 losses.

Shunts and Spina Bifida

Frederick A. Boop, MD

Associate Professor, Neurosurgery UAMS/ACH

Spina Bifida is a layman's term for individuals born with a birth defect which involves the brain and the spinal cord. This defect was first described in 1891 by a German neuropathologist named Chiari and the medical term for it is the Chiari II malformation.

The Chiari II malformation includes abnormal development of the base of the brain, almost always is associated with a myelomeningocele, and, in 9 out of 10 persons, is associated with hydrocephalus. Hydrocephalus is a failure of the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) to circulate properly. Since the CSF is produced within the brain at a constant rate, failure of its absorption causes the fluid to build up within the brain, putting pressure on the brain itself as well as causing the head to grow abnormally large.

When hydrocephalus is recognized, it requires surgical treatment. If the brain is allowed to continue under abnormally high pressure for too long, the pressure can cause permanent damage. Our treatment for hydrocephalus is to provide the body with an alternative plumbing system, since the body's own system failed to develop properly. The new system is termed a "shunt" and serves to divert the CSF from the fluid spaces within the brain, called ventricles, to another place in the body where tissue can absorb it. Most commonly shunts divert CSF to the abdominal cavity, or peritoneum. Such a shunt is called a ventriculoperitoneal, or VP shunt. An advantage to their system is that extra tubing can be placed within the peritoneum of an infant or child to allow for growth of the body. A shunt consists of a plastic tube within the ventricle which is connected to a one-way pressure regulated valve which can be felt un-

derneath the skin. Another plastic tube then connects to the valve and is tunneled under the skin down to the peritoneum.

Shunts are a permanent fixture and are necessary throughout life. Being simple mechanical devices, they are associated with two common complications. First is infection. If a shunt becomes infected, the patient usually runs fever, develops a stiff neck and sore back and may find that their eyes are sensitive to light. When a shunt infection occurs, the patient must be treated with antibiotics until the infection has resolved, usually around two weeks. Then, the contaminated shunt removed and a new shunt placed. The second common shunt problem is obstruction. If any tissue or debris gets into the shunt tubing, the shunt will not be able to transmit fluid and the patient will develop symptoms related to the buildup of pressure within the brain. Most often the person notices headache, nausea, vomiting and a desire to sleep. These symptoms usually start out mildly and progressively get worse over a period of a few hours to a few days. If the pressure goes untreated, the person will progress from sleepiness to coma and eventually may die.

Treatment of a shunt malfunction is common. Most people with a shunt will require at least one revision by the time they are ten years of age. Once symptoms develop, the physician will usually order a CT scan and see an increase in the size of the fluid spaces, or ventricles, within the brain, signaling that the shunt has quit working. The patient is then transferred emergently, sometimes by helicopter to a facility where there is a neurosurgeon. The surgeon will then take the person to surgery and disconnect the shunt, testing the



tubing to find the point of blockage. The portion of the shunt which is responsible for the malfunction is replaced and the symptoms resolve. Most people are able to return home two to three days following shunt revision.

Although shunts are not the perfect solution to hydrocephalus, they are safe, have a proven performance record, and may last for years without needing replaced. Much research is being done to provide both better and easier methods of detecting shunt problems as well as new ways to treat hydrocephalus. In the meantime, those persons who have shunts should maintain periodic visits with their physician and should be aware of the signs and symptoms of shunt malfunction, seeking help from their doctor as soon as these symptoms are recognized.

FEMALE SEXUALITY FACT SHEET AVAILABLE

A new fact sheet on Female Sexuality and spinal cord disability is now available from the ASSCC Education and Resource Center. The fact sheet discusses common concerns facing women with a spinal cord disability. Single copies of the fact sheet are free and can be requested from the Education and Resource Center or from any ASSCC Case Manager.

Fact sheets are one page information pamphlets about specific spinal cord disability problems. The Female Sexuality fact sheet is the eighth in the ASSCC fact sheet series.



Governor Proclaims June Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month

Governor Bill Clinton has proclaimed June, 1992 as Spinal Cord Injury Awareness month. This coincides with national Spinal Cord Injury Awareness month. The proclamation was initiated by the Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission. "June typically signifies the beginning of summer and of the highest incidence months for spinal cord injuries," said Cheryl Vines, ASSCC Executive Director. "We wanted to designate a month that would kick off our prevention promotions and yet would also offer an opportunity to showcase the successes and contributions of Arkansans with spinal cord injuries."

"Living with Spinal Cord Injuries in the 90's," the third annual ASSCC seminar will start off the month on June 5. Other activities planned to date include an SCI awareness day and auction sponsored by the Arkansas Spinal Cord Injury Association on June 6 and a kick off for the "Check It Out before You Dive" SCI prevention promotion at Coleman Dairy.

Individuals, communities, agencies and rehabilitation hospitals are encouraged to conduct activities and events to promote spinal cord injury awareness in June. If you conduct an event or have a press release printed, please send a copy/description or photos to the Spinal Courier so we can include highlights in our next issue!

State of Arkansas

Executive Department

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME--
GREETINGS:

WHEREAS, spinal cord injuries resulting in permanent damage to the central nervous system cause lifetime disabilities including loss of motor control, sensation, and normal bodily functions; and

WHEREAS, about 200 Arkansans sustain spinal cord disabilities each year from injuries caused by motor vehicle crashes, falls, violent acts, and sports activities as well as from disease processes and congenital defects; and

WHEREAS, spinal cord injuries primarily occur to young men in the 15 to 30 year old age group who are most prone to risk taking behavior; and

WHEREAS, the cost for medical treatment, care, equipment services, vocational training, and home modifications near \$1.5 million over a lifetime; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission since 1975 has worked to identify and provide services to meet the unique lifelong needs of Arkansans with spinal cord injuries. The Commission, in cooperation with the Arkansas Spinal Cord Injury Association and the Arkansas Department of Health, Office of Disability Prevention, designate June 1992 as a month of concern for informing the citizens of Arkansas of the incidence and prevention of spinal cord injuries as well as to make them aware of the contributions and accomplishments of individuals with spinal cord injury in Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, most spinal cord injuries are preventable by such proven prevention strategies as buckling seat belts every time, not driving or participating in sports activities while drinking alcohol, learning to identify and avoid potentially violent situations, and using the "Check it out, before you dive" approach when diving into water;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Clinton, Governor of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim June 1992, as SPINAL CORD INJURY AWARENESS MONTH in Arkansas.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed at the Capitol in Little Rock on this 19th day of April in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred ninety-two.

Signed: *Bill Clinton*, Governor *Bill McCuen*, Secretary of State

FISHING DERBIES!

April 25 Lake Dardenelle Marina
10 am to 12 Noon
Contact Robert Griffin
968-5596

May 2 Murphy Park - Springdale
10 am to 2 pm
Contact Benny Beals
521-1270

May 9 AR College - Batesville
10 am to 4 pm
Contact Charles Crowson
793-4153

May 22 AR State U. - Jonesboro
10 am to 2 pm
Contact Jim Smith
972-4923

June 6 MacArthur Park - L. Rock
8 am to 12 Noon
Contact Mary Elliot at BRI
223-7520

Bring your fishing pole, bait and a cooler with ice if you plan to keep your catch. Snacks provided. Persons 16 and over must have a valid fishing license. There are no fees for participation.

SPINAL COURIER

Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission
1501 North University, Suite 470
Little Rock, AR 72207

Commission Members:

Grover Evans - Jonesboro
Sloan Lessley - Calico Rock
Russell Patton - Jonesboro (Chair)
Glennis Sharp - North Little Rock
Sheila Galbraith Bronfman - Little Rock

FORWARDING AND RETURN
POSTAGE GUARANTEED,
ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED

Video Review By Mike Morrissey

Several interesting videos are available for viewing at the Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission Education and Resource Center Library.

"Autonomic Dysreflexia" explains the causes, symptoms and treatment of this condition which can occur in people with spinal cord injuries. This video would be especially beneficial in helping such persons understand this life-threatening illness.

"Design For Integrated Recreation" features people with spinal cord injuries participating in various types of recreation, such as kayaking and bicycling. This provides active persons with a spinal

cord injury an excellent overview of the wide range of recreational activities available.

"Mobility Access" showcases the Volkswagen Vanagon, a vehicle especially suitable for people with disabilities. This might be of particular interest to someone looking for a new van.

"Rollin' Razorbacks" is an exciting video featuring the Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks wheelchair basketball team in the 1991 National Wheelchair Basketball Association national championship game. Also included is a segment of "The Arkansas Traveler," with footage of team practices along

Its Camp Time Again!

The Spinal Cord Commission in cooperation with MedCamps of Arkansas, Camp Aldersgate, and Spina Bifida Association of Arkansas will again sponsor our two week-long camping sessions for children with spina bifida and other spinal cord injuries. The dates for the camping sessions are June 7-12 for children ages 6-10, and

June 28-July 3 for children ages 11-16. Camp registration for each camp week will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, and conclude at 11:00 a.m. on Friday with an awards ceremony.

Camp applications and registration letters have been mailed and we urge you to complete these as soon as possible. Enrollment is a first come, first serve basis.

Printed on recycled paper.

BULK RATE US POSTAGE PAID Little Rock, AR
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